

Appl. No.: 10/706,612
Amdt. Dated February 21, 2006
Reply to Office Action Dated September 20, 2005

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached replacement sheet includes drawings for Figures 3 and 4, and particularly, a corrected drawing for Figure 4 to reflect the drawing as originally filed in the application. The Letter to Official Draftsmen filed on June 28, 2004 inadvertently included an improper drawing for Figure 4. The present amendment includes the correct drawing. No new matter has been added.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet

REMARKS

Claims 1-8 are pending and claims 1, 5, and 6 have been amended. Support for the amendments may be found throughout the specification, and particularly at paragraphs 89-91. No new matter has been added. Applicants earnestly solicit allowance of the application in light of the above amendments and following remarks.

Rejections Pursuant 35 U.S.C. § 102

All pending claims have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by *Bone* (U.S. Pat No. 6,647,309). Applicants respectfully submit that *Bone* does not disclose the limitations of the pending claims.

Independent Claim 1

Independent claim 1 relates to a method for monitoring a manufacturing process of a plurality of physical objects where an analysis is performed using values of at least one process parameter of the manufacturing process. One physical object that best characterizes the plurality of physical objects is determined from the plurality of physical objects. The one physical object is determined based on the analysis of the at least one process parameter. The one physical object that best characterizes the physical objects is selected for monitoring the manufacturing process. Accordingly, in the method of claim 1 a physical object is determined and selected from a plurality of objects to monitor the manufacturing process.

The cited reference to *Bone* does not disclose the limitations of independent claim 1. Instead, *Bone* relates determining whether an excursion of a process exists to perform an automated test wafer generation in response to determining that an excursion of the process exists. (Abstract) Processing conditions are examined to check for excursions or deviations in

those conditions. (col. 6, ll. 44-47). Production data is analyzed and a determination of whether there are out-of-control events is made to determine whether there is an excursion in the process. (col. 6, ll. 53-67). When there is no excursion, the process continues. (col. 7, ll. 60-64). When there is an excursion, the automated test wafer generation process is initiated where a lot representing test wafers is acquired and sent to a metrology tool. (col. 7, l. 65 to col. 8, l. 17). The test wafers are tested and metrology data is stored and correlated to corresponding production data. (col. 8, ll. 17-27). Accordingly, *Bone* describes monitoring process data to determine whether an excursion exists, and using test wafers to monitor the process when an excursion has been identified and allowing the process to continue a test wafer when no excursion exists.

The method of *Bone*, therefore, clearly does not determine and select one physical object from a plurality of objects which best characterizes the plurality of physical objects for monitoring the process of the plurality of objects as recited in claim 1. To the contrary, *Bone* does not identify any of the objects which characterizes the wafers. To the extent that any objects are identified in *Bone*, they are test wafers and those test wafers are used correlated to the production wafers, and not determined or selected from the production wafers. Accordingly, *Bone* does not disclose the limitations of claim 1. Applicant respectfully submit that *Bone* does not anticipate claim 1.

Claims 2-8

Applicants also respectfully submit that dependent claims 2-8 are not anticipated by the cited art. As discussed, *Bone* does not disclose the limitations for independent claim 1. Therefore, the limitations of the claims dependent therefrom are also not disclosed or fairly

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suggested by the cited art. Claims 5 and 6 have been amended to clarify the claimed subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2-8 are not anticipated.

Amendments to Drawings

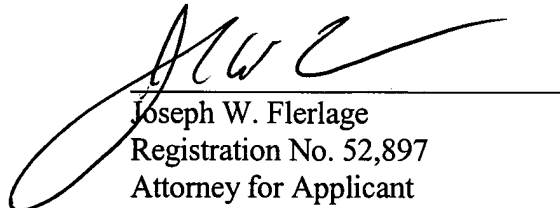
Applicants have submitted a replacement sheet of drawings for Figures 3 and 4. In the replacement sheet, Figure 3 is unchanged, and Figure 4 has been changed to reflect the original drawing of Figure 4 in the application. No new mater has been added. Applicant respectfully requests consideration of the drawings.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests favorable consideration and allowance for all pending claims. If the examiner believes that a telephone conference would expedite allowance of the application, the examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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